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COOPERATION AND COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS AND SUBREGIONAL GROUPINGS

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. Since its forty-ninth session the Commission and its secretariat, in accordance with the provisions of decision O (45) and other major decisions, have further strengthened their cooperation and coordination of activities with other international organizations and institutions, including bodies of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. This cooperation and coordination continues to be an important feature of the Commission's methods of work to ensure the optimum use of resources and expertise and to avoid duplication of work. The wide range of organizations with which ECE cooperates reflects its dual capacity as a United Nations programme and a regional body cooperating closely with other European institutions.

2. This note is divided into three parts. The first provides an account of the highlights of ECE cooperation with its major partners in the region, namely the European Union and the European Commission, OECD, OSCE (CSCE), EBRD, IMF, the World Bank, the Council of Europe and World Trade Organization (GATT). The second part gives an account of the main areas of cooperation with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The third part relates to ECE cooperation with the growing list of subregional groupings which have been created recently within the ECE region.

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A. ECE COOPERATION WITH ITS MAJOR PARTNERS

European Union and European Commission

3. While ECE cooperation with the **European Union** and the **European Commission** extends to all areas of its work, the following are the highlights of this cooperation since the forty-ninth session of the Commission.

Executive Direction and Management

4. The Executive Secretary visited the headquarters of the European Commission in November 1993 and plans a further visit in May 1995. He was received by the Commissioner for External Political Relations and other Senior Officials. In November 1994 he held a luncheon for European Union Ambassadors. The Office of the Executive Secretary continues to maintain close cooperation with the European Commission.

Environment

5. The European Commission regularly participates in the meetings of the ECE Working Group of Senior Governmental Officials "Environment for Europe" and actively cooperates in the formulation of the Environment Programme for Europe. The European Commission has earmarked around Ecu 100,000 to cover the cost of consultants entrusted with drafting the Programme, and earmarked some Ecu 300,000 to assist the Bulgarian Government in the organization of the Sofia Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" in October 1995.

6. The European Community (EC), being a Party to the 1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, regularly participates in sessions of the Executive Body and its subsidiary bodies and shares in the costs (3.33% of the budget) of the international coordination of monitoring, modelling and evaluation of air pollution in Europe (EMEP).

7. In principle, the EC countries have used the Convention as a vehicle to extend some of the EC regulations and standards, while, at the same time, using the momentum of the Convention to push policy forward within the EC. This balance should be kept alive. The lack of resources at the disposal of the secretariat for technical work justifies cooperation with the EC and particularly with the European Environment Agency (EEA) on technical matters.

Transport

8. ECE has participated in a number of meetings of the European Commission focusing on the development of the Trans European Networks for road, rail and combined transport. Furthermore, ECE regularly attends the sessions of the G-24 Working Group on Transport in order to contribute to the assistance to central and eastern European countries and is a member of the Steering Committee ensuring follow-up to the Second Pan-European Transport Conference. The European Commission is actively involved in practically all ECE working areas of inland transport and plays an important role in the preparation of international Agreements and Conventions concluded under the auspices of the Inland Transport Committee in the infrastructural and regulatory fields.

9. The main substantive areas in which ECE cooperates with the European Union are the following: definition of common criteria regarding bottlenecks,

missing links and quality of service of infrastructure networks; establishment of uniform safety and environmental conditions for the construction of road vehicles; customs questions affecting transport; transport of dangerous goods; and transport statistics, establishment of a joint questionnaire on transport statistics. The European Commission played an important role in the launching of the Conference on Transport and the Environment.

Statistics

10. Cooperation between ECE and the European Commission in statistics is based on a partnership:

- Eurostat will use TACIS funds to finance the participation of FSU countries in the 1995 CES plenary session

- Eurostat is using PHARE funds to finance the participation of central and east European countries in about 10 meetings organized by the Conference in different fields of statistics in 1994/95

- Eurostat has agreed to contribute approximately $30,000 this year to assist the secretariat in doing important work in the fields of statistics of women, population censuses and household income statistics

- Eurostat and ECE are jointly organizing nine meetings in 1994/94 (in the fields of business registers, environmental methods, waste and recycling statistics, agriculture statistics, migration statistics, statistics of services, population censuses, SNA and international price comparisons)

- Eurostat is an active member of the CES Bureau

- Eurostat actively works with the secretariat in several different intersecretariat working groups, whose main purpose is to improve coordination in specific fields of statistics

- Eurostat and ECE (and other international organizations) are now using joint questionnaires to collect statistics in different fields (e.g. energy statistics and international migration statistics). This has substantially reduced the reporting burden on countries

- Eurostat and ECE are currently jointly producing two statistical publications (on statistics of women and on environment statistics), and in the future they may also produce a joint publication on housing statistics

- Eurostat, ECE and OECD all actively participate in annual joint programme review meetings, whose main purpose is to coordinate international statistical work in the region.

Trade Facilitation

11. The European Commission participates actively in the activities of the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures, and hosts the West European EDIFACT Board secretariat.

Economic Analysis

12. Cooperation with the European Commission consists largely of individual contacts between the secretariats of ECE and DG-II.

Energy

13. The secretariat has been maintaining and developing contacts with the Directorate-General for Energy as well as the CEC Directorate-General in charge of international cooperation, i.e. their international programme units for assistance to central and east European countries: PHARE, TACIS, THERMIE, regarding special activities and projects.

14. Since the introduction of major political changes in the countries of central and eastern Europe, these contacts have on occasion led to concrete cooperative action. While the ECE has most of the good ideas for cooperation with these countries, it is the European Union which provides the money for implementing projects.

15. In some instances it seems that CEC through its PHARE and TACIS programmes has been selecting project proposals initially developed by ECE without giving due recognition to the ECE for the good preparatory work. However, from examining files related to contacts prior to 1994 it transpires that ECE could have been more active in following up on funding possibilities for the activities initiated by ECE.

16. Events organized by ECE have also been attended by representatives of the European Community, although mostly by members of their Permanent Delegation in Geneva. The technical contributions from the CEC to these events has therefore been limited.

17. CEC played a very active role in the ECE Symposium on Clean Coal Technology (May 1993, Helsinki). A joint workshop was held in October 1993 in Brussels on Opportunities for the development of new economic activities in the coal-mining regions of central and eastern Europe and the CIS. The secretariat attended the EU Conference on New Energy Realities in the Black Sea Region (May 1994, Chalkidiki, Greece). Visits to Brussels to discuss opportunities for joint programming and EU funding of technical cooperation activities identified by ECE (funding of the gas centre, funding and joint management of programmes for energy efficiency and clean coal technology). There are regular consultations regarding the European Energy Charter and its Energy Efficiency Protocol.

18. Restructuring of the coal industry and its regional and social consequences: ECE was invited in 1994 to Strasbourg to participate in and contribute to a Special Session devoted to the reconversion of mining regions. ECE assisted the European Parliament in providing regional authorities from east European countries and especially from the Russian Federation in this event. Common activities are envisaged in this field in the near future.

Development of International Trade

19. The secretariat has working contacts in trade and FDI-related areas with the respective EC directorates and exchange information on issues of interest to ECE and EC.

Industry and Technology

20. The "Comparative Study of Chemical Legislation in ECE Member Countries" is financed by the European Union and EFTA. The study is being carried out under ECE aegis using the LEGICHIM database system at the EU; this to date only covers EU legislation. The study will extend that expertise to all ECE member States, to provide a framework for harmonized legislation within these States, and in particular to assist the newly industrializing economies to develop chemical legislation consistent with the rest of the ECE region, to ease technology transfer, trade, environmental and other relations.

21. A Steering Committee was established between representatives of the European Union and several other bodies, which published a report on "The Steel Industry in Europe". This was achieved by pooling information, contacts and resources of each organization, and with industry and government representatives of countries in transition (eight such countries participated). The report is the first of this type. While not making specific recommendations, the contents of the report clearly indicate directions for change and implies economic and social consequences of the changes which might occur (e.g. the loss of 300,000 jobs in the steel sector of eastern and central Europe). It was presented at a conference jointly sponsored by the organizations in April 1994 in Cracow. The study will be up-dated every two years. Considering the success of the report, a second phase of the project has begun: "Opportunities for Cooperation at the International Level in the Steel Sector".

22. An ECE Seminar was held to introduce to ECE member States the European Union PRODCOM, a new system to harmonize production and trade statistics which until PRODCOM were often not comparable. The practical application of PRODCOM is expected to begin in 1996.

23. There is substantial cooperation with the EU in establishing guidelines for biotechnology within the science and technology and standardization programmes.

Agriculture and Timber

24. The European Union and the European Commission participated in most sessions of the Committee on Agriculture and the Timber Committee and their subsidiary bodies. Cooperation is institutionalized in the field of statistics, with intersecretariat Working Groups coordinating statistical activities on agriculture subjects (together with FAO, OECD, Eurostat) and on timber and forestry (with Eurostat and FAO at this stage).

Human Settlements

25. In its work on guidelines on land administration, the ECE Committee on Human Settlements cooperates with the European Union PHARE Programme. A case-study on the Hungarian experience in establishing land registration system with the assistance of the PHARE Programme will be annexed to the guidelines. A joint workshop (Hungary/EU PHARE/ECE) on cadastre and land registration systems was held in Budapest (Hungary) in November 1994.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

26. ECE cooperation with OECD covers a wide range of activities of which the highlights during the past year were the following.

Executive Direction and Management

27. The Executive Secretary visited the Headquarters of OECD in November 1993. He and his senior colleagues continue to maintain close relations with the Office of the Secretary-General of OECD and his senior officials.

Environment

28. OECD and ECE are cooperating to extend to the entire region systems and practices developed by OECD for its member countries, in particular in the field of the environmentally sound management of hazardous chemicals, economic instruments and national environmental performance reviews. A second ad hoc meeting on the management of hazardous chemicals was held in Vienna in October 1994 in cooperation with OECD. ECE is collaborating with OECD on the three OECD pilot environmental performance reviews of Poland, Bulgaria and Belarus. A workshop on the reviews was organized in close cooperation with OECD in Geneva (May 1994).

29. The joint meetings of the Bureaux of the ECE Committee on Environmental policy and the OECD Environment Policy Committee are continuing on an annual basis, illustrating successful cooperative management.

30. A Workshop on Chemical Accidents hosted by the Government of France has been organized in cooperation with OECD, in Divonne-les-Bains (France) (6-7 February 1995). The main objective of the Workshop was to assist Governments and industry to enhance capacity building to prevent, prepare for and respond to industrial accidents, with particular emphasis on countries in transition. The Workshop considered means and ways of involving the chemical industry in the implementation of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents in order to improve overall industrial safety in the ECE region and how coordination of the existing programmes dealing with the chemical safety within the framework of other international organizations and institutions can be improved to achieve this goal.

Transport

31. The main area in which ECE cooperates with OECD in transport is in the development of an international system of classification and labelling of dangerous goods, as a follow-up to Chapter 19 of Agenda 21. OECD is also participating in the preparatory work for the 1996 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment.

Statistics

32. OECD provides a great deal of technical assistance, particularly concerned with national accounts, to virtually all the countries in transition. The secretariat works very closely with them in this context including the joint sponsoring of special meetings.

33. The secretariat has joint questionnaires with OECD (e.g. questionnaires on energy statistics) and share data in other areas. Data collection on economic statistics is closely coordinated with OECD.

34. The programme of statistical work of the ECE is closely coordinated with that of OECD and other organization through a number of formal and informal mechanisms. The head of statistics of the OECD is a permanent observer on the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians, and the heads of statistics of OECD and the ECE meet regularly to ensure close collaboration.

Trade Facilitation

35. Representatives from the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures are participating in a study being developed by OECD on the Economic Impact of EDI.

Economic Analysis

36. Economists from the secretariat have continued to cooperate closely with OECD and to improve coordination by consultation on specific items in the work programme, especially as regards the transition economies. The secretariat has participated in the following meetings: Review Committee on Poland; Group of Financial Experts on Central and Eastern European Countries; and the Expert Group on Economics and Environmental Policy Integration. Consultations were also held on the respective work programmes of the two secretariats in the area of labour market issues in the transition economies.

Energy

37. An exchange of information took place in the field of coal statistics on trade, production, demand and transport. OECD was represented at the session of the Working Party on Coal Trade, Statistics and Transport.

Development of International Trade

38. Representatives of OECD regularly participate in sessions of the Committee on the Development of Trade including its latest meeting in December 1994. Representatives of the secretariat regularly participate in and contribute to the OECD meetings on investment promotion in transition economies and in meetings on FDI statistics organized under the auspices of OECD. The ECE and OECD secretariats are preparing a compendium of national practices in compiling FDI statistics.

Industry and Technology

39. An intersecretariat meeting is held every year in Geneva between OECD and the Steel section of the secretariat, together with the International Iron and Steel Institute, to harmonize statistical questionnaires and definitions of steel consumption. OECD and ECE jointly develop economic indicators on science and technology in the economies in transition, and establish statistical questionnaires for engineering industries and automation, and exchange input for database management.

Agriculture and Timber

40. OECD and ECE regularly participate in each others relevant activities, and OECD takes part in the intersecretariat working group on agricultural statistics. Intersecretariat consultations with OECD and FAO have been initiated on cooperation with countries in transition in the field of agricultural policies. The food quality standards elaborated by ECE are complemented with explanatory brochures prepared under the OECD Scheme for standardization of fresh fruits and vegetables. ECE contributed to an OECD seminar on Forestry, agriculture and environment where preliminary results of the ECE/FAO European Timber Trends study were presented.

Human Settlements

20. The Committee on Human Settlements has continued its cooperation with OECD on the project on ecological cities and has started cooperating on the urban indicator project. The ECE secretariat participated in a meeting of secretariats of international organizations working on the subject of urban indicators held at the OECD Headquarters in an effort to maximize the use of resources and ensure that their individual initiatives were complementary.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE/CSCE)

41. The secretariat contributed a review of economic developments and policy issues in the transition economies to the Economic Forum of the CSCE in March (see document E/ECE/1312).

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

Executive Management and Direction

42. The Executive Secretary visited the Headquarters of EBRD in November 1994. He will represent the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of EBRD on 10 April 1995.

Environment

43. The EBRD, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are cooperating with the ECE Working Group of Senior Governmental Officials "Environment for Europe" in the preparation of the Sofia Conference.

Transport

44. ECE is cooperating with EBRD and IBRD in the framework of the G-24 Working Group on Transport with a view to identifying priority investment projects in central and eastern Europe as a follow-up to the second Pan-European Transport Conference.

Economic Analysis

45. Contacts with the EBRD have been strengthened. A member of the secretariat attended the annual meeting of the Bank in St. Petersburg and consultations were held in December with the Chief Economist's office in London on various aspects of our respective work programmes. The secretariat has agreed to help the EBRD in its analysis of current economic developments

in the transition economies by supplying it with statistical data and pre-publication texts of ECE analysis.

Development of International Trade

46. Representatives of the EBRD regularly take part in meetings of the Working Party on International Contract Practices in Industry and provide presentations on related issues. The secretariat and respective divisions of EBRD exchange publications and studies. In 1994, an article on the Working Party's assistance to countries in transition was published in the EBRD publication "Law in Transition".

Industry and Technology

47. A "Global Study on the Steel Industry" is funded in part by EBRD and the World Bank. The study covers product lines, existing capacities, production, trade and consumption for steel products to the year 2000.

48. It is hoped that these organizations will participate in funding the "Pilot Project Demonstrating the Environmental Cleanup of Selected Sites Polluted by Chemicals", for which substantial interest has been shown by central and east European countries. To date nearly forty sites have been identified in those States, and a Meeting of Experts is scheduled for March 1995 to continue this project.

International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank

Transport

49. ECE participated in a Seminar on road safety in central and eastern Europe, organized jointly by the World Bank and the EC-PHARE and TACIS programmes in 1994.

Statistics

50. ECE works particularly closely with the IMF and the World Bank in data sharing and data collection, and in collaboration in technical assistance to countries in transition. The heads of statistics from the IMF and the World Bank are currently observers in the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians, and both organizations contribute to the joint presentation of statistical programmes which is considered by the plenary session of the Conference this year.

Council of Europe

51. The Council of Europe is cooperating actively with the ECE in the preparation of the Sofia Ministerial Conference, particularly by drawing up a pan-European biodiversity strategy for submission to the Sofia Conference.

52. The ECE secretariat also collaborates with the Council of Europe. An excellent example of close collaboration during the last year has been in monitoring the special census of population in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

53. Following the European Population Conference, which was co-organized by ECE, the Council of Europe and UNFPA as a regional preparatory meeting for the International Conference on Population and Development, the three organizations jointly published two volumes of proceedings of the Conference along with the conference recommendations.

54. The ECE Committee on Human Settlements has continued its cooperation with the Council of Europe on sustainable development for urban areas, and joint activities are envisaged with the Social Development Fund of the Council of Europe on the Committee's project on country profiles of the housing sector. The ECE secretariat contributed a paper (Towards sustainable human settlements) to the Tenth European Conference of Ministers Responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), which took place in Oslo in 1994.

World Trade Organization (WTO/GATT)

55. The ECE secretariat participates in regular sessions of GATT on selected commodities, providing updated information. The WTO (GATT) Secretariat Trade Policy Division assisted ECE in preparing the Round-table discussion paper for the Committee on the Development of Trade in December 1994 and a senior member of the GATT secretariat took part in the meeting. ECE has working contacts in trade areas related to countries in transition with the respective WTO staff members.

B. ECE COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

56. ECE cooperates with very many other organizations in the implementation of its programmes of work. The following is a list of the main features of that cooperation since the forty-ninth session of the Commission.

Environment

57. A new cooperative arrangement has been made between the Committee on Environmental Policy and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/EURO). Following the second European Conference on Environment and Health (Helsinki, June 1994), the European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC) was established for the implementation of the Environmental Health Action Plan for Europe, to identify and address emerging environmental health issues and to cooperate with partners in the "Environment for Europe" process. It is made up of four representatives designated by WHO/EURO and four representatives selected by the Committee on Environmental Policy, and representatives from relevant international organizations and institutions.

58. In the preparations for the new Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions (adopted in 1994), integrated assessment modelling played a prominent role. Decisive contributions came from the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI). The work was channelled through the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling and the Working Group on Strategies. It is expected that similar cooperation will be carried out in developing the second step to the Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or their Transboundary Fluxes.

59. On effect-related matters WHO, through its European Centre for Environment and Health, contributes substantially to the scientific basis for negotiations on emission reductions. Such input is expected to increase in importance for the preparatory work on nitrogen compounds, persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and heavy metals, all covered in the work-plan of the Executive Body. The WHO contributions are channelled through the Working Group on Effects.

60. The same channel is used informally to benefit from the information compiled by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). The information relates, in particular to the ecological effects of acidification.

61. Under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, comprehensive guidelines to ECE Governments on the control of water pollution from fertilizers and pesticides have been prepared under the auspices of the Committee on Environmental Policy and the Committee on Agriculture in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Moreover, ECE and the FAO Regional Office for Europe are cooperating in the preparation of a regional workshop on water pollution control from agriculture to be hosted in October 1995 by Croatia.

62. A number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Friends of the Earth (FOE), Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE), International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), International Council of Environmental Law, the Regional Environmental Center (REC) in Budapest, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and others, are actively participating in the preparation of the Sofia Ministerial Conference. They are preparing inputs for the Conference and attending the meetings under the auspices of the Working Group of Senior Governmental Officials "Environment for Europe", the central coordinating body for this process.

63. ECE cooperated with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the context of the joint ECE/UNEP project on Strengthening Environmental Management Capabilities in Eastern and Central European Countries. Within this project four workshops were held in 1994. The results of the workshops laid the basis for a set of recommendations to Governments of ECE countries with economies in transition to a market economy in the form of Guidelines on Integrated Environmental Management in Countries in Transition (ECE/CEP/5). Under the project a computerized database for environmental impact assessment has also been prepared. Discussions have begun with UNEP in an effort to prepare a series of regional workshops on water management, which will help to resolve issues arising from Agenda 21, from the ECE Action Plan to implement Agenda 21 and from the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

Transport

64. ECE cooperates with the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) in bringing the results of ECE work in transport to the attention of Ministers and also in developing into the ECE legal instruments the Resolutions adopted by Ministers. Specific areas of cooperation are the definition of common criteria regarding bottlenecks, missing links and quality

of service of infrastructure networks; road traffic safety; environmental questions, in particular regarding the establishment of environmental standards for vehicles in international road traffic; combined transport; road transport statistics, including the establishment of a joint questionnaire.

65. ECE cooperates with the Central Commission for the Navigation on the Rhine (CCNR) and with the Danube Commission on infrastructure requirements regarding inland waterways, requirements concerning the construction of inland navigation vessels, rules of the road in inland navigation, and harmonization of technical, safety and legal requirements in inland navigation. In addition cooperation continues with the following organizations: International Union of Railways (UIC) (rail transport infrastructure, facilitation of border crossing in international rail transport); Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSZhD) (rail transport infrastructure, international customs transit procedures for the carriage of goods by rail); International Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) (facilitation of border crossing in international rail transport, international customs transit procedures for the carriage of goods by rail, transport of dangerous goods); International Road Transport Union (road transport facilitation questions, in particular international transport of goods under cover of TIR carnets, transport of dangerous goods by road); International Road Transport Federation (IRF) (road transport infrastructure); International Touring Alliance (AIT) and International Automobile Federation (FIA) (customs questions, road transport safety, construction of vehicles); International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA) (motor vehicle manufacturing, motor vehicles for the transport of dangerous goods).

Trade Facilitation

66. In its legal work programme the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures is cooperating with UNCITRAL to develop solutions to avoid legal and commercial practice barriers to trade.

67. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been developed between ECE and ISO/IEC concerning cooperation in the field of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).

68. The European Free Trade Association and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) are also examples of regional organizations which use trade facilitation recommendations for regional implementation.

69. UNCTAD is actively engaged in the promotion and implementation of trade facilitation techniques in, and outside, the ECE region. In particular, the UNCTAD World Trade Summit on Trade Efficiency (Columbus, Ohio, 1994) emphasized the importance of implementing UN/EDIFACT and other trade facilitation recommendations.

Economic Analysis

70. An economist attended the annual meeting of the BIS and consulted BIS economists on their work on the transition economies.

71. As part of the follow-up to the European Population Conference (Geneva, March 1993), which was jointly organized by the ECE Population Activities Unit, the Council of Europe and UNFPA, these organizations have jointly

published two volumes of conference proceedings and the recommendations of the Conference. The volumes include, among other things, five basic papers of the Conference and country statements submitted by ECE member Governments.

72. As part of the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development, ECE and the American Association of Retired Persons are jointly organizing a Workshop on Population Ageing in Europe and North America: a Message to the World Summit for Social Development (Geneva, 13-14 February 1995). Participants in the workshop will include representatives of various intergovernmental organizations, in particular the World Health Organization, non-governmental organizations, Governments and academia. The workshop will focus on public policy responses to population ageing in the ECE region.

Energy

73. ECE cooperates closely with the International Labour Organisation on social aspects of restructuring the coal industry and on mine safety - ILO was co-organizer for the Workshop on Occupational Safety and provided funds for several east European participants. ECE participated in and contributed to the 1995 ILO Coal Commission annual session.

74. ECE cooperates with the World Coal Institute (NGO) which provides experts for ECE meetings in the field of coal, supports ECE policies and programmes, takes part in the organization of ECE events (Meeting of Experts on Clean Coal Technology, Symposium on Sustainable Development, etc.).

Development of International Trade

75. In 1994 working contacts were established with the UNIDO divisions dealing with the promotion of FDI and SMEs. At their request studies on investment and on SMEs prepared by the secretariat were sent to UNIDO.

76. ECE cooperates closely with UNCTAD on trade, foreign investment and privatization issues. Representatives of the two secretariats participate in and contribute to meetings organized by other organizations and exchange information on issues of common interest.

77. ECE took part in preparing and conducting the workshop on the CIS and Baltic States on regional trade, payments and economic cooperation (Republic of Moldova, January 1995). The meeting was financed by UNDP and organized by UNCTAD in cooperation with ECE and ITC.

Industry and Technology

78. The Working Party on the Chemical Industry has a long-standing association with the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), which provides industrial expertise and guidance on many of its projects. CEFIC are also regular attenders of, and active contributors to, the annual Working Party sessions. Similar arrangements are now being generated with the European Federation of Chemical Engineers (EFCE) and other professional societies (e.g. BCECA, the British Chemical Engineering Contractors Association, whose members' activities are in fact 60% outside the UK).

79. The secretariat has begun discussions with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) with respect to cooperation in the

development of the on-going study of Comparative Chemical Legislation noted above. This organization is interested both in providing input as well as using the results of the study.

80. During the last annual session of the Working Party on the Chemical Industry a Round-Table discussion was chaired by the Association of Plastics Manufacturers in Europe (APME), comprising virtually all European petrochemical and polymer companies, who also provided several of the lead speakers. A similar arrangement is now being developed with the International Rubber Study Group (IRSG), a forum comprising some 80% of the world's rubber producers. Close cooperation between APME, IRSG and the section's activities will be very useful in assuring good technical operating and training conditions in the chemically-based synthetic materials industries of the countries in transition.

81. Close cooperation and regular contacts with some 25-30 international organizations in the engineering industries and automation area during the past five years has significantly contributed to information and avoided duplication of efforts. Cooperation with the International Federation of Robotics (IFR) on industrial robotics, leading to a successful UN sales publication, and with the International Federation for Medical and Biological Engineering (IFMBE) on the implementation of new medical technologies in the region are two such examples.

82. Similarly, the Working Party on Standardization Policies cooperates regularly with the International Organization for Legal Metrology (OIML), the EFTA secretariat, the Council of Independent States (CIS) and many international and regional standards bodies (foremost ISO and IEC) in setting priorities for international, regional and national standards work and formulating recommendations aimed at facilitating international cooperation and removing technical barriers to international trade. This cooperation takes the form of regular (annual) exchanges of information and the organization of joint activities (e.g. a training programme on metrology for participants from countries in transition organized jointly between the ECE secretariat and OIML to take place in Paris (France) in March 1995).

83. The secretariat maintains contact with the Central European Initiative (CEI) through participation in the fourth Plenary Meeting of the Working Party on SMEs, in partial fulfilment of the ECE commitment to commence cooperation in transport, environment and energy sectors. The Ministerial Meeting on Trade and Industry Cooperation will take place in Skopje, FYROM, in March 1995, and the secretariat will prepare the ECE position paper.

84. The European Regional Industrial Development Organization (ERIDO) and the European Research Foundation and Institute (ERFI) have actively supported the ECE Industry and Technology idea of launching a "European Forum on Sustainable Industrial Development" and co-chaired the ECE Meeting of Experts held in Geneva in November 1994 to consider proposals for such a Forum. ERIDO would like to launch a training programme jointly with the ECE on "Facility Location Planning and Regional Economic Development in Central Europe". This is presently in the planning stage, and financing of the course by the EU is part of the structure of the programme.

Agriculture and Timber

85. Cooperation with FAO is materialized mainly by its contribution to the Joint FAO/ECE Agriculture and Timber Division and the five joint ECE/FAO Working Parties under the Committee on Agriculture and the Timber Committee. A decision by FAO to transfer its staff from joint divisions with the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions, effective in the first half of 1995, puts an end to this form of cooperation. The new cooperation framework enables continuation of joint activities in the field of Timber, but requires reconsideration of activities under the Committee on Agriculture.

86. Discussions are being held with the FAO secretariat of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in order to improve the working arrangements between the ECE Working Party on standardization of perishable produce and quality development and the Codex Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruits and vegetables (CCTFFV).

87. ILO provides critical secretariat inputs into the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training.

88. ECE/FAO contributes to the follow-up process to the Ministerial Conferences of Strasbourg and Helsinki on the Protection of Forests in Europe and acts as international coordinator for the monitoring of the implementation of Resolution H3 on Forestry Cooperation with Countries in transition.

Human Settlements

89. The Committee has continued its cooperation with NGOs. It holds regular meetings to enhance this collaboration. NGO representatives participate in the work of task forces, and actively take part in ECE workshops. A joint ECE/International Union of Tenants workshop is scheduled to take place in June 1995.

C. ECE COOPERATION WITH SUBREGIONAL GROUPINGS

Environment

90. Cooperation has been strengthened between ECE and the **Central European Initiative (CEI)** programme on promoting territorial/spatial sustainable development with a view to contributing to the definition of the programme's objectives, the coordination of planning and implementation of projects under ECE and CEI auspices and to arrange for feedback on the experience and results from the subregional to the regional level. The CEI 2010 consultative meeting on sustainable economic development in central Europe convened by the Hungarian Government with the support of the European Union PHARE Programme in Budapest from 12 to 13 January 1995 welcomed the ECE support for this CEI programme and the ECE readiness to play an active role, in particular, through the relevant ECE conventions and programmes. These are seen as efficient tools in furthering spatial development in particular in a transboundary context, including water and air quality monitoring networks; environment and health impact assessment; public participation in development projects; contingency planning and simulation exercises; energy efficiency demonstration zones promoting small and medium-sized enterprises; and transport infrastructure improvements.

91. In preparing for new legal instruments on nitrogen compounds, persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals, cooperation and coordination with the commissions for the subregional sea conventions are being enhanced. This concerns, in particular, the **Oslo-Paris Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPARCOM)** and the **Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM)**, and to a lesser degree the **Mediterranean Action Plan of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution**. The cooperation and coordination relate to the criteria for and the selection of substances for regulation, consistency in commitments for emission reductions, and harmonization of monitoring and reporting. The relevant subsidiary bodies under the conventions and the secretariats are involved in this cooperation.

92. Under the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, adopted by the environment ministers of the eight Arctic countries, an **Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)** has been established. It gives priority to persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals, radio-nucleids and acidification. The ministers have agreed that the necessary action on POPs, heavy metals and acidification for the protection of the Arctic region should be taken, as appropriate, under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. This calls for close cooperation on effect studies, economic and technical assessments, monitoring and policy development. The secretariats provide the necessary liaison between the relevant bodies.

93. At the Workshop on Environmental Impact Assessment in the Arctic Area convened under the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, countries in the Arctic area decided to implement the ECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, to further adapt its provisions to the needs of the Arctic area and to further strengthen the cooperation between the countries in the region with respect to environmental protection.

Transport

94. ECE has participated in a number of subregional Ministerial Transport Conferences, such as the **Baltic Sea Transport Conference** in Warsaw, and the **Central European Transport Conferences** in Sopron, Brijuni and Bratislava, and the **Black Sea Transport Conference** in Constanta. The ECE has also participated in several meetings of the **Central European Initiative** and contributed in this connection to infrastructural and regulatory questions in transport.

Statistics

95. In statistics, the ECE has a close relationship with the **CIS Statistical Committee**. Their representatives attend many of our meetings and we rely upon them for the provision of statistics on countries of the former Soviet Union.

Energy

96. **Black Sea Economic Cooperation** is a regional grouping composed of Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine. At its meeting of Meetings of Foreign Affairs in June 1994 (Tbilisi) it was decided to establish a Working Group on Energy. This Working Group had its first meeting in Varna in October 1994 and the BSEC Council had a general overview of the energy sector

in its member countries to identify the real energy-related issues and needs of this region. A group of projects were proposed by the BSEC Council: an interconnection of electric power systems of member countries, electricity tariffs, rehabilitation of thermal power stations and transmission lines, supervisory control and data acquisition systems for electricity distribution. The secretariat has contributed to their booklet on the Energy Situation in the BSEC Region. ECE could contribute or jointly carry out some of their project proposals, due to its long-standing experience in international interconnections and other energy-related issues.

97. ECE could contribute to the activities of the Central Europe Initiative by reviewing the energy and environment-related issued.

98. As regards cooperation in the Mediterranean countries, in the area of renewables, efforts under the Committee on Energy continue to support the development and utilization of RSE in the ECE region and especially Mediterranean countries. A workshop on RSE was held in cooperation with the Government of Spain and the Plataforma Solar de Almeria in May 1994. Israel is exploring the possibility of hosting a workshop on solar energy in cooperation with ECE.

99. In 1998 the **UNDP-ECE Solar Applications and Energy Efficiency in Building Design Project** was launched to develop a mini-computer programme, operators' manual, design guidelines and training courses for practising architects in southern and eastern Europe to learn energy efficiency building design techniques implemented in western Europe during the last 15 years. An Ad Hoc Meeting of Experts was held in London in July 1990 at the beginning of a study tour in the United Kingdom of British energy efficient buildings, products, building materials and technology. This project had particular benefits for countries in the Mediterranean and served as an example of interregional outreach. As an associated agency to UNIDO the ECE secretariat prepared an annual report on the macro-economic and energy policy context of industrial energy conservation policies in the region since 1989.

100. In 1989 a Symposium on the Optimum Use of Primary Energy in Final Heat Consumption was held to review efficiency improvements throughout the energy system. A Symposium on Energy Efficiency Measures in Industry was held in Slovenia in 1991.

Development of International Trade

101. **International Committee for Economic Reform and Cooperation (ICERC).** Established in 1993 in Kiev, Ukraine with the support of the CIS states (particularly Russian Federation), countries of central and eastern Europe, western countries and international institutions. Aims of the ICERC: development of practical projects and programmes in order to stimulate trade and investment among the countries of the region and to promote east-west economic cooperation and investment. Contacts with ICERC were established in January 1995. It was decided that both sides will exchange information on issues of common interest and on meetings organized by them. ECE was invited to participate in the ICERC's meeting on improving conditions for FDI in NIS and in central and eastern Europe, to be held in Bonn in February 1995.

Human Settlements

102. The delegations of the Baltic States offered to organize the study visits following the Committee's fifty-sixth session in September 1995. These study visits are currently being organized and will focus on: (a) social housing policies; (b) policies for and practical problems of tackling energy issues in housing; and (c) inner-city conservation and urban renewal. Furthermore, a workshop on housing privatization is scheduled to take place in Estonia in 1995.